

CARYATID

A Study of the Current Status of Women in Architecture

An Honors Thesis (Honors 499)

By

Kathryn L. Shackelford

Thesis Advisor  
Sarah Haley

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Sarah E. Haley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sarah" being the most prominent part.

Ball State University  
Muncie, Indiana

July 2009

Thesis  
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2009  
.S53

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Sarah Haley for providing the opportunity to complete a study of women in architecture. I am grateful for her support and guidance over the past few years especially though my thesis semester. I hope to convey my deep appreciation for the opportunities she has allowed me to explore.

I would like to thank Frank Brewer for his kindness, help and support through this trying and difficult time. I appreciate his help editing my paper for technical errors.

Thanks to Dr. Karen Keddy for helping me formulate my topic and providing me with direction. Without her help I would not have been able to discover the plethora of resources available.

Finally, I would like to thank my family for providing me the opportunity to study architecture and expose me to the world of design. This thesis has provided me a new prospective on my future and given me information vital to succeeding in the professional world.



## ABSTRACT

The objective of CARYATID is to understand the main challenges facing women in Architecture and provide a resource to inform women and prospective architects. In order to become better educated about the social challenges of the architecture profession, research from the past century and data from studies by the American Institute of Architects has been gathered. Work from authors like Kathryn Anthony, Sherry Ahrentzen, and Linda Grout were compiled. The main areas of focus are the "glass ceiling" issues, wage disparities, and discrimination. Also, CARYATID includes gender issues in architecture education. Because disparities are not caused solely by the opposite gender, understanding how women constrain each other is addressed. By comparing data from all research, it is possible to define the major issues facing women within the profession and how to confront social constraints. Though they may still exist, understanding and exposing them can provide an opportunity to gain enough strength to overcome the issues. With a little more impetus, women will be able to shatter one of the few remaining glass ceilings.

## ARTIST STATEMENT

Over winter break during my junior year as an undergraduate architecture student, my grandfather pulled me aside at a family gathering. He hugged me and told me how proud he was that I was doing so well in school. The major was difficult and I was making dean's list. I was flattered by his compliment. He was proud, he went on to explain, that I was doing so well as a woman because women do not think like architects. I was shocked. I thought sexism died out with the dinosaurs but here it was smiling at me in a Christmas sweater.

I did not want to believe that women were inherently less capable of anything. Throughout my childhood my family had encouraged me to follow my dreams, and never once did I feel less able of achieving my goals because of my sex. There had always been a critical mass of females in school and work. It was not until I entered college did I feel my chances at success would be hurt by my gender. By my sophomore year, I had already experienced discrimination in the classroom, be it subtle and subversive. Professors attributed my work to my male colleagues. In group projects with male classmate, my contributions were sidelined or ignored. After classroom hours, in studio harassment ranged from childish to perverse. What had changed between high school and college? Was I suddenly incapable of producing work at the level of my male colleagues? Or, as I hypothesized, the "old boys club" in architecture had never evolved and sexism ran rampant throughout the profession.

I immediately began a series of research and analysis to disprove (or prove) my grandfather's theory. I wanted to understand the challenges facing women and examine what, if any, differences existed between the female and male perspective of design. As I began to compile data, I felt an overwhelming sense of fellowship with my female contemporaries. By recognizing discrimination and disparities, I was less likely to internalize the behavior as my own lack of skill or ability. But I did not want to keep my results to myself, so I designed this magazine to share the data I have collected. Through investigating the issues, I believe women will be better prepared to assess and overcome problems they will be confronted with in the classroom and workplace.

I included in the project two articles that I found most pertinent to the issues women face today. The first, *Not Only Zaha*, was first published in *Architecture Record* in 2006. It chronicles a group of leading female practitioners and the struggles and triumphs they faced to succeed. The article was the first I had read that specifically addressed women in architecture and sparked my interest in the topic. The second article is *Room at the Top* by Denise Scott Brown. Her story is one of the most famous cases of blatant discrimination ever recorded. While she and her husband Robert Venturi worked as partners, all of the firm's success was attributed to him. Through her trials and struggles, she exposed the subtle and derisive types of devaluing and partiality that face all professional women. These articles allow the reader to take a more personal approach to the understanding of sexism and success within architecture. Their words had a significant impact on my professional outlook, and I am certain they will effect others similarly.

# CARYATID

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Kathryn L. Shackelford



# CARYA

ARCHITECTURE <WOMEN> DESIGN

july 2009

**THE FEMININE  
ADVANTAGE**

What makes women ideal

HERE'S A WILL—  
HERE'S A WAY OUT

# BÖLYÜ

CONTRACT  
CARPET

451.1250

BÖLYÜ

CAMBRIDGE

DIMENSION

LOTUS

PEERLESS





# ARYATID

## FEATURES

and Articles written by

L. Shackelford unless

is noted

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RYATID

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**On the cover...**

Neil Barrett's flagship store  
designed by world famous  
architect Zaha Hadid

Photo by  
Alejandro Palacio



# ARTICLES

The Symbol that makes a

5

and Advertising

5


Women Behind the Research

6

Professional Arms

7





ty and comfort. Contessa seating from Teknion



Teknic



Kathryn Shackelford is a graduate from Ball State University's College of Architecture and Planning. While an undergrad she was elected Vice President and later President of the American Institute of Architecture Students Ball State Chapter. She was also a member of Kappa Delta Sorority, Order of

# ED

## LETTER FROM

Over winter break during student, my grandfather pulled me and told me how proud he was. It was difficult and I was making it. He was proud, he went on to explain that women do not think like architects. I was with the dinosaurs but here I

I immediately began a series



# Symbol that es a Statement

the acropolis in Athens, Greece  
likely to come across the south  
of the Erechtheum where one of  
t enduring images of ancient  
ture lies. There stands a group  
yatyids, six draped female  
that act as structural columns  
ing the roof of the porch.

aryatids hold significance  
th ancient and modern  
In the Greek Era, they  
e symbolic representation of  
omen who carried baskets  
heir head and danced in  
tion of the goddess Artemis.  
ern design, the Caryatid

represents a significant struggle for  
women architects. The Caryatid, with  
both beauty and grace, must support  
the weight of the building just as  
female architects must support the  
pressures of the design profession.

I chose the Caryatid as the title for  
this publication for its symbolic and  
societal reference. Many female  
architects claim that they feel as  
though all of the pressures of their  
gender are lying on their shoulders  
to succeed in architecture. They must  
continue supporting the weight despite  
staggering odds of discrimination,  
devaluation, and marginalization. They  
must accomplish this while embracing  
their strong feminine character.  
Here is to our modern Caryatids.

## CHITECTS AND ADVERTISING

ts are notoriously depicted  
and film as strapping white  
a neat black suit carrying a  
blueprints under one arm and  
a clients hand with the other.  
women and minority architects  
en members of the profession  
ecades, they are rarely  
edged by the public. More  
an not, women are used as sex  
or relegated to spaces where  
determined most appropriate  
s the kitchen or bathroom.  
r instance the advertisements  
d in this magazine.

and every advertisement in this  
ion was taken from a modern  
ture magazine. The oldest  
ion dates from 2006. The  
image is used to sell objects  
from chairs and desks to  
and wood panelling. In venues  
etropolitan Magazine and  
ture Record where women  
amon contributors, their work is

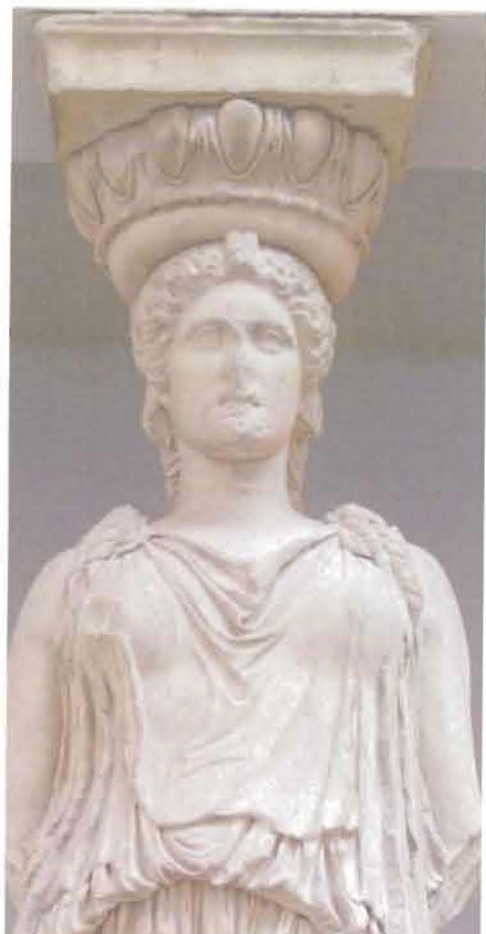
undermined by the hypersexualization  
of the female image or down played  
by the limitation of skills to kitchen  
appliances or bathroom fixtures. In  
over twenty magazines, this author was  
only able to find one advertisement  
containing a sexual image of a male.  
Unlike their counterparts, women  
are rarely depicted as designers.  
Women in business suits are in a  
number of the advertisements, but  
they are always consumers. This can  
be juxtaposed by the numerous ads  
that show male designers pointing  
and explaining a design as often seen  
in architecture/design magazines.

Pick up a magazine near you and  
take note of the use of women in  
advertisement. The images displayed  
in popular media help to define our  
opinion of gender and worth. If the  
tables were turned and the male image  
was hypersexualized in order to sell  
products, would our opinion of male  
worth be changed? Think about it.

RYATID



Photo by the Elgin Collection



## LINDA GROAT

Professor Groat's research interests include interpretations of environmental meaning, place theory, gender issues in architectural education, as well as research design and methods. Her foundational work in these areas has had a significant impact on design studies research, and has received recognition in the academic realm as well as in national media such as U.S. News and World Report and Women in Higher Education. The University of Michigan honored her work on gender in architectural education with the 1998 Sarah Goddard Power Award. In addition to professional experience in architecture and graduate degrees in teaching and design, she holds a

meaningful applications professional and academic. She has been widely published in these audiences in journals such as *Architecture*, *Progressive Architecture*, *Journal of Architectural Education*, *Journal of Environmental Planning Research*, and *Journal of Architectural Research*. She has co-authored numerous chapters to edited books and has also published two books: *Giving Places Meaning* (1998) and *Architectural Research* [(2002), co-authored with Wang]. With her husband, John Stern, she is presently writing a book intended for a general audience titled *Family Places: Creating Relationships for the Relationships You*.

For more information visit the [UNM website](#) page or e-mail Linda at [Ingroat@umich.edu](#)



Professions in Professional Architecture often compares itself to other fields for prospective, are the professions chosen really appropriate vantage points?

Professional medicine may be an art, it is not Art. Architects like to include themselves along with the greats include Law, Medicine, and Engineering. The male dominated professions would help substantiate the that architects see themselves "great men." Surprisingly, architects make less money, experience more unemployment, maintain less powerful positions than what they consider other paralleled professions.

Any references made to compare the increase of diversity in the profession are paralleled to those of medicine and law. Architecture is still less diverse than both with 19% of the professionals being women. Although architecture includes more women than both engineering and dentistry (Fams 7). This would lead the champions of architecture to conclude they are in fact on par with their peers. However, architecture has very little in

common with these fields. Surprisingly, other licensed professions who earn salaries equivalent to architecture are nurses, social work professionals, and public school teachers-- all female dominated fields ("F-Word 76). Compared to these licensed fields, architects are diversifying at a glacial pace. It is the misconception of architecture as among the top echelon of professional hierarchy that is used to validate limited effort to actively pursue diversity programs.

One author claimed that the experience of women in national newspapers more closely represents the architecture profession. They are "accepted certainly, but not generally thought of as potential major players or decision makers; often confined to certain predictable areas of the business, the world of kitchen and bathroom design," (Finch 134).

For information and resources, see page 40.

#### **Architecture (NAAB, 2003; AIA 2000)**

Registered Architects: 13%  
Tenured Faculty: 17%  
Interns: N/A  
Students: 40%

#### **Medicine (AMA, 2003)**

Physicians: 26%  
Tenured Faculty: 13%  
Residents: 51%  
Students: 48%

#### **Law (ABA, 2003)**

Attorneys: 29%  
Tenured Faculty: 25%  
Associates: 42%  
Students: 49%

#### **Engineering**

Professional Engineers: 9%  
Students: 20%



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## B R I E F HISTORY OF WOMEN IN THE PROFESSION

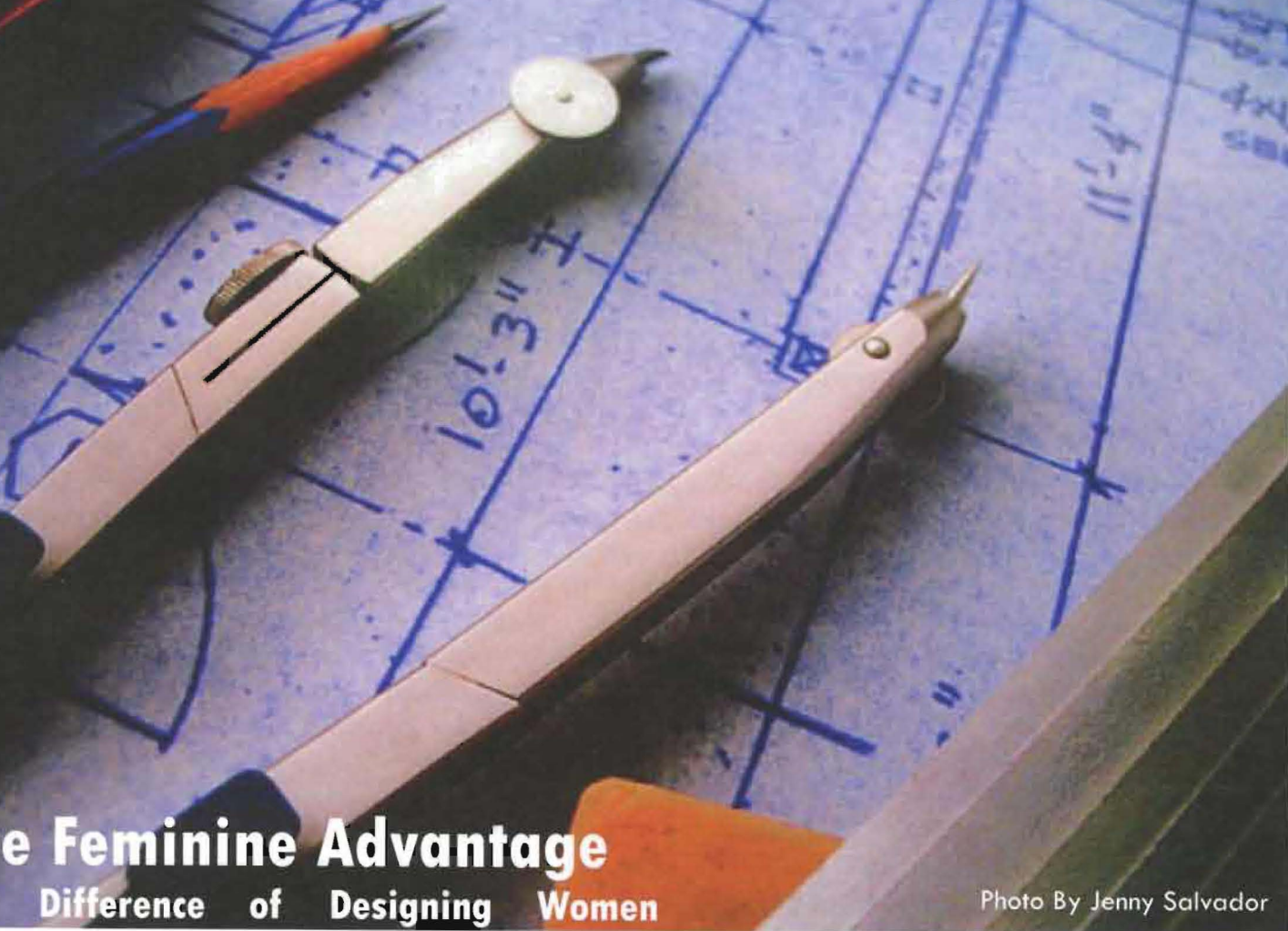
Between 1880 and 1920 the struggles to distinguish the architectural profession from the building trades made the question of appropriate architectural training an ideological issue with particular ramifications. The establishment of architecture schools in the United States after the civil war would seem to have come at an optimal time for women.

Traditionally, apprenticeships were the only path to becoming



The concept of “character” came to occupy a central place in the culture of professionalism (Carr-Saunders 1909, 29). What the AIA defined as the “character” of an architect was a self-serving pattern that linked career achievements with moral attributes. It required the architect to have “worldly credentials” that women were unable to gain through social forces. The AIA made it clear that architecture





## e Feminine Advantage

### Difference of Designing Women

Photo By Jenny Salvador

ally, white male architects created as if their sex and race were utterly irrelevant to their work. Usually, those elements that make men feminine and different are seen as a detriment to the profession, the profession losing clients and standing on the brink of extinction, the unique perspective of underrepresented designers may be the exact thing that appeals to clients and brings relevance to the drawing board. Looking a look at the characteristics that make women advantaged designers, one can see the important contributions women can make to the architectural profession.

World has always been seen in an arching pattern of value and

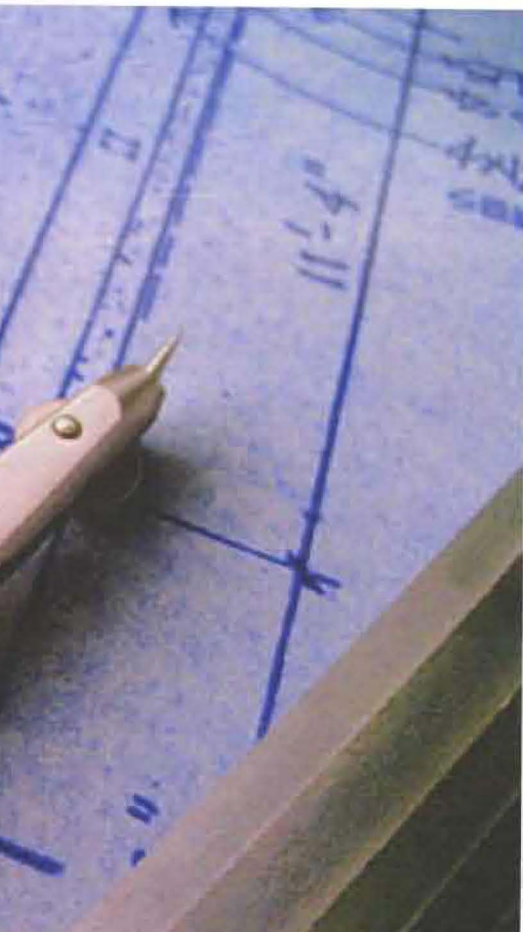
devalue. Because male patterns of behavior have been dominant for centuries, it is often determined that what is male is best. Genderization also deals with issues of power: who wields power, how power is attained, in what forms, and who decides what actions attitudes, and products are labeled male or female and subsequently dominated/normative or subordinate/deviant. This Apollonian and Dionysian gendering of form and matter attaches constructs of masculinity to our concept of what constitutes a well educated person or suitable educational method.

First, it must be noted that researchers have found no differences between men and women in spatial visualization. Only a moderate advantage for men in spatial perception of horizontality/verticality and mental rotation was

found, and a small sex difference in math ("Sex" 12). Unlike the belief held by my grandfather on that winter afternoon, men are not innately better at "thinking" like architects.

Psychologically, men are associated with agentic qualities: aggressive, ambitious, dominant, self-confident, forceful, self-reliant and individualistic. All these characteristics are ideal for competitive capital business. In contrast, women are associated with communal qualities: affectionate, helpful, friendly, kind, sympathetic, interpersonally sensitive, gentle, and soft-spoken. Because these characteristics are not seen as positive attributes for successful business practices, many female professionals attempt to abandon them and adopt more masculine attributes. The masculine qualities are considered





normative and superior because they represent the ruling power. It has been suggested that many women who adopt the traditional role of architect are limiting themselves and withholding vital qualities from the profession. Those females who choose to embrace their feminine characteristics are potentially more effective at producing an environmental responsibility than those who wish to emulate traditional male roles.

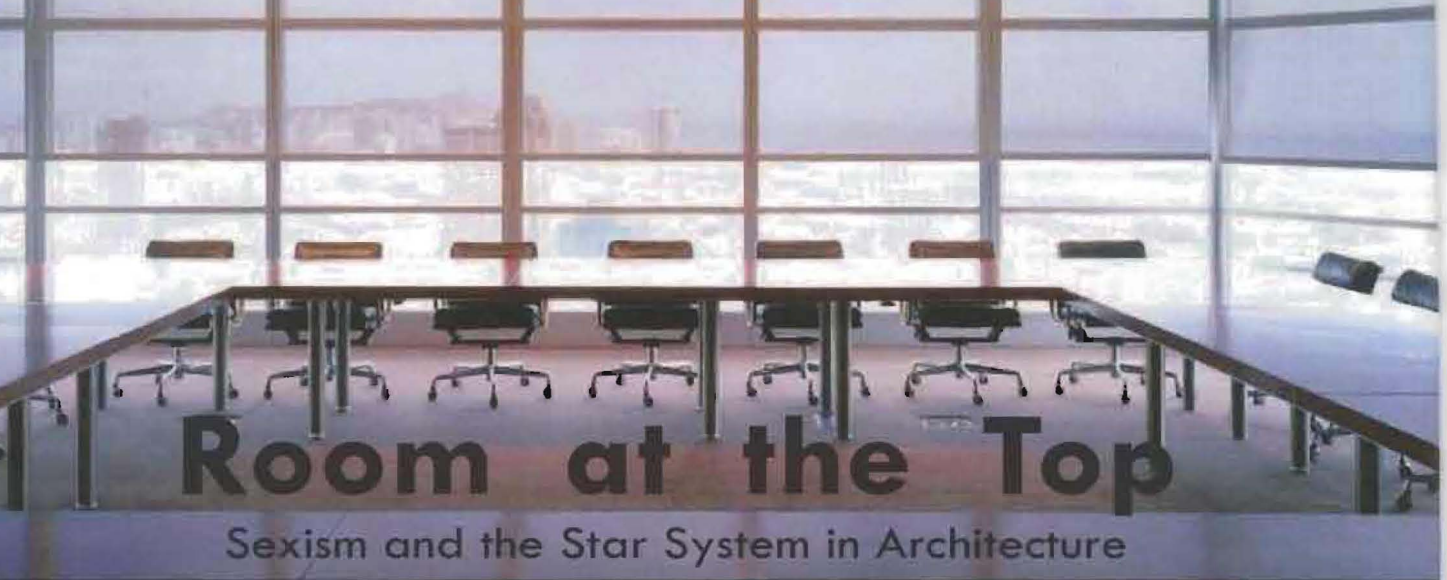
The masculine image of architecture argues for an emphasis on individual and group isolationism in training and education, as well as a notion of sanctity of individual creator and wielder of an illusive knowledge base. The truth is that architecture is in fact a very collaborative process that requires great skill in communication and value assessment. The very foundation of modern design lies on the

products. Female design is more likely to produce a building throughout than to create a "sexy" building to be photographed. Though some architects maintain it is can be one "sexy" image sells a building, those designs are notoriously flawed mechanically. In instance Ghery's Bilbao in Spain once out of style are often devalued. The profession is poised at a point of change, and the abilities of designers bring could help prevent from becoming irreversibly in

For more information on this topic, see the following

Adams, Annamarie, and Peter. *Designing Women: Gender and the Architecture Profession*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press Inc.

Ahrentzen, Sherry. "The F-Word in Architecture: A Feminist Analysis in/of/for Architecture." *Reconstructing Architecture: Critical*



Denise Scott Brown

Sexism in Architecture A Place for Women

*Women are disadvantaged and underrepresentation in the field, working with a partner or spouse can be the difficulties of starting out on your own. Marriage to or partnership with another architect presents both challenges and opportunities. Women have been eclipsed in this way because of the phenomenon of misattribution, one of the subtle forms of discrimination. Denise Scott Brown was one of the few women architects to speak out about this injustice. She was famously overshadowed by the architecture profession. In 1991 her husband and partner, Robert Venturi-- but not she-- was awarded the Pritzker Prize for lifetime achievement, despite the fact that they collaborated on everything. The following article was written by Denise Scott Brown to describe her first hand experience of being the woman in the shadows.*

Professional women can recount "my stories" about discrimination they have suffered during their careers. My stories include social as well as grand trauma. Some are less common forms of

discrimination came my way when, in mid-career, I married a colleague and we joined our professional lives just as fame (though not fortune) hit him. I watched as he was manufactured into an architectural guru before my eyes and, to some extent, on the basis of our joint work and the work of our firm.

When Bob and I married, in 1967, I was an associate professor. I had taught at the University of Pennsylvania and Berkeley, and had initiated the first program in the new school of architecture at UCLA. I had tenure. My publication record was respected; my students, enthusiastic. My colleagues, mostly older than I, accorded me the same respect they show each other, and I had walked the same corridors of power they had (or thought I had).

The first indication of my new status came when an architect whose work I had reviewed said, "We at the office think it was Bob writing, using your name." By the time we wrote *Learning from Las Vegas*, our growing experience with incorrect attributions prompted Bob to include a note at the beginning of the book asking that the work and ideas not be attributed to

him alone and describe in the nature of our collaboration and the roles played by individuals in our firm. A body of theory and design in architecture apparently must be associated by architecture critics with an individual: the more emotional their criticism, the stronger is its focus on one person.

To avoid misattribution, our office provides an information sheet describing our preferred forms of attribution--the work to our firm, the writing to the person who signed the article or book. The result is that some critics now make a pro forma attribution in an inconspicuous place; then, in the body of the text, the design of the work and the ideas in the writing are attributed to Robert Venturi.

In the Japanese journal *Architecture and Urbanism*, for example, Hideki Shimizu wrote;

A review of his plan for the Crosstown Community suggests that Venturi is not so much affording his theory new development as giving the source of his architecture approach clear form in fundamental attitude toward city planning is the thing that enables him to develop his basic posture in relation to architecture. The Crosstown Community reveals





n him alone and describe in the nature of  
d our collaboration and the roles played  
s by individuals in our firm. A body  
of theory and design in architecture  
o apparently must be associated by

a profound mood of affectionate emotion.

This would be fine except that the Crosstown Community was my work and was attributed as such in our book; I doubt whether, over a period of three years, Bob spent two afternoons on it.

When Praeger published a series of interviews with architects, my name was omitted from the dust jacket. We complained and Praeger added my name, although objecting that this would spoil the cover design. On the inside flap, however, "eight architects" and "the men behind" modern architecture were mentioned. As nine were listed on the front, I gather I am still left out.

There have been exceptions. Adad Louise Huxtable has never put a foot wrong with me. She works hard at reporting our ideas correctly too. A few critics have changed their method of attribution in response to our

influential member of the client wants "the architect" as his Italian journalist who ignored my request that they address me as I understand more Italian does; the tunnel vision of my toward Bob; the "so you're an architect!" to Bob, and the w "so you're an architect too!"

These experiences have caused me to fight, suffer doubt and confusion, expend too much energy. "I'm pleased if my work were attributed to my husband," says the designer of an architect. And a critic asks, "Why do you worry about these things? We know you're going to know your real role in the office in teaching. Isn't that enough?" I doubt whether it would be for my male colleagues. What would Peter Eisenman do if his late work were attributed to his

ated that the meeting be open  
men only, probably incorrectly,  
or the same emotional reasons  
ding hurt pride) that make  
nal movement initially stress  
atism. Nevertheless, about six  
ame. They hid in the back and  
of the audience. The hundred  
women identified strongly with  
periences; "Me too!" "My God,  
oo!" echoed everywhere. We  
soon high on our shared woe  
support we felt for and from each  
Later, it struck me that the males  
rown glummer as we grew more  
siastic. They seemed unable to  
stand what was exercising us.

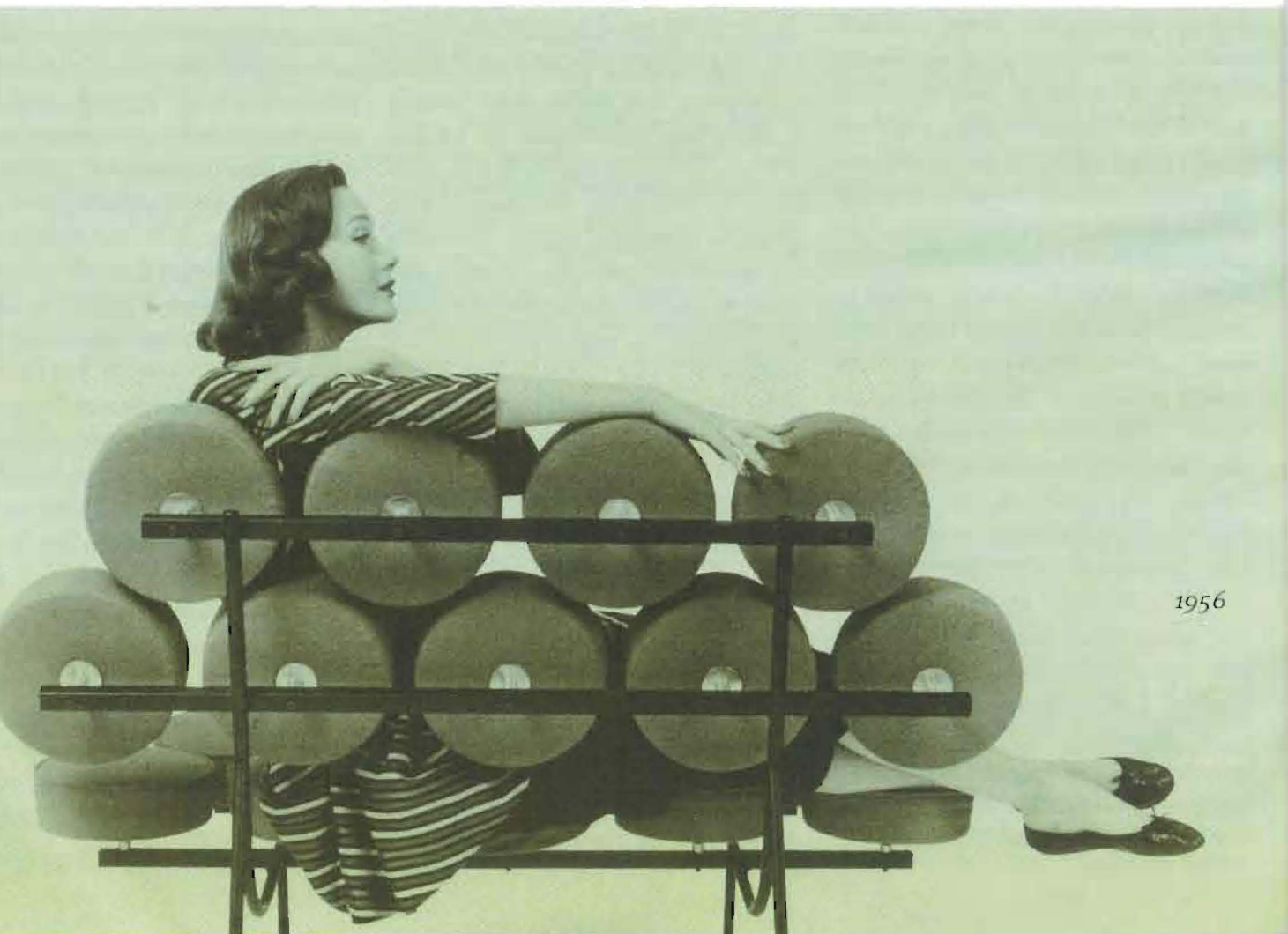
then I have spoke at several  
rences on women in architecture.  
receive inquiries of interest for  
ship and departmental chairs  
al times a year. I find myself  
committees where I am the only

We two tokens greet each other  
wryly. I am frequently invited to  
lecture at architecture schools, "to  
be a role model for our girls." I  
am happy to do this for their young  
women but I would rather be asked  
purely because my work is interesting.

Finally I essayed my own  
interpretations of sexism and the  
star system in architecture. Budd  
Schulberg defines "Star Quality" as  
a "mysterious amalgam of self-love,  
vivacity, style and sexual promise."  
Though his definition catches the spirit  
of architectural stardom, it omits the  
fact that stardom is something done  
to a star by others. Stars cannot  
create themselves. Why do architects  
need to create stars? Because, I think,  
architecture deals with unmeasurables.  
Although architecture is both science  
and art, architects stand or fall in  
their own estimation and in that of

"good designers," and the criteria for  
this are ill-defined and undefinable.

Faced with unmeasurables, people  
steer their way by magic. Before the  
invention of navigational instruments,  
a lady was carved on the prow of the  
boat to help sailors cross the ocean;  
and architects, grappling with the  
intangibles of design, select a guru  
whose work gives them personal help  
in areas where there are few rules  
to follow. The guru, as architectural  
father figure, is subject to intense hate  
and love; either way, the relationship is  
personal, it can only be a one-to-one  
affair. This accounts for the intensely *ad  
hominem* stance of some of "Venturi's"  
critics. If the attribution were correct  
the tone would be more even, as one  
cannot easily wax emotional over  
several people. I suspect, too, that  
for male architects the guru must be  
male. There can be no Mom and Pop



their peers by whether they are "good designers," and the criteria for this are ill-defined and undefinable.

Faced with unmeasurables, people steer their way by magic. Before the invention of navigational instruments, a lady was carved on the prow of the boat to help sailors cross the ocean; and architects, grappling with the intangibles of design, select a guru whose work gives them personal help in areas where there are few rules to follow. The guru, as architectural father figure, is subject to intense hate and love; either way, the relationship is personal, it can only be a one-to-one affair. This accounts for the intensely *ad hominem* stance of some of "Venturi's" critics. If the attribution were correct the tone would be more even, as one cannot easily wax emotional over several people. I suspect, too, that for male architects the guru must be

gurus in architecture. The architectural prima donnas are all male.

Next a colleague having her own difficulties in an American Studies department brought the work of Lionel Tiger to my attention. In *Men in Groups*, he writes that men run in male packs and ambitious women must understand this. I recall, as well, the exclamation of the French architect Lionel Scein, writing *Le Carre Bleu* in the 1950s: "the so-called studio spirit is merely the spirit of a caste." This brings to mind the upper-class origins of the American architecture profession, the difference between upper-class and middle-class attitudes to women, and the strong similarities that still exist today between the architecture profession and a men's club.

American architectural education was modeled on the turn-of-the-

It was a rip-roaring place a lot of fun, but its organization was strongly authoritarian, especially in its system for judging work. The authoritarian personality and the we-happy-few philosophy engendered by the Bauhaus stayed on in Modern architecture after the Beaux-Arts architectural philosophy had been abandoned. The architecture club still excludes

The heroically original, the architectural revolutionaries, his avant-garde technological experiments to save the masses through mass production, is a macho ideal that never there was one. It sits on the middle-aged reactionaries who bear its mantle today. The conserving and nurturing outlook is being recommended to the profession by urbanists and ecologists, in the name



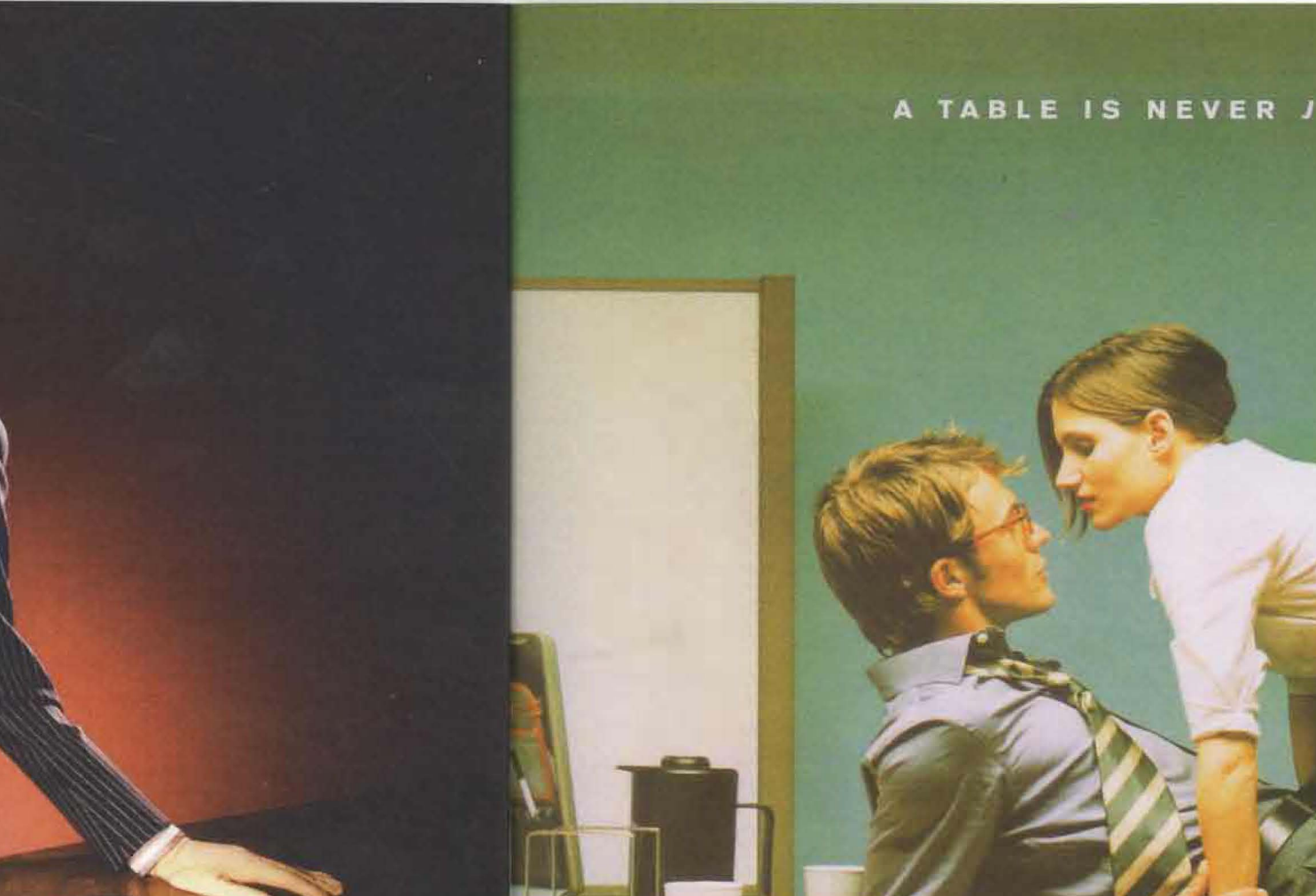


## COUNTER INTELLIGENCE

ingenious, it knows your cookware. Thermador's ZoneSmart™ technology actually senses the size of your pots and pans, adjusts each accordingly, and even turns off the power when they're removed. A variety of element sizes and configurations, including a bridge Thermador's original triple element, provide unrivaled versatility and flexibility. This cooktop truly is counter intelligence you can rely on. Empowering the kitchen enthusiast for more than 70 years.



A TABLE IS NEVER J







Carpet Karma:

Since installing carpet with Eco Solution Q, Sabrina has had a string of eleven good hair days.

Do the right thing and good things happen to you. Eco Solution Q® fiber can be recycled into carpet fiber again and again. And how will the universe thank you for that? With awesome carpet performance. More great colors than ever. A lifetime warranty. And some way-above-average performance from those fibers on your head.





# STARGAZING Redefining the Culture of Studio

Due to the predominating impact of studio, the student's experience of studio pedagogy is central to understanding their interpretations of architectural education. It is often an all consuming environment with

## FACULTY

To begin, one of the first glaring issues to face the education system is the lack of female faculty. "Under representation of women in studio teaching is not a reflection of their proportionate numbers in the architecture education," writes Groat, "There is a consistent by which the integrative components they are anxious to make is ignored, or denied," ("Voice"). This becomes a significant research proves that female faculty feel their ability to interact with faculty members is limited



complaints from the profession that the educational system is producing individuals who are problem solvers. They claim that faculty and administrators fail to see the whole person, or even to address the developing personhood of the undergraduate student with appropriate seriousness. A main theme of this issue is inadequate counseling and lack of attention, especially for minority, women, and nontraditional students.

## EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Architectural educators must critically question those who label and identify stars or geniuses and the process by which they do so to unveil the social and gendered practices in design-keeping and stargazing. The current system, as it is known, has little to do with today's complex relations in architecture and construction. This system routinely credits only a single individual with the accomplishments of a team. Many females are hurt by the privileging of studio because females are more inclined for collaborative design. Students report, "I've worked in groups where there are two guys and two girls, the professor would assume that most of the work was

done by the women," ("Reconceptualizing" 172). These are not isolated incidents and the results of continuous devaluing and dismissal leads many women to conclude that there is a tacit double standard whereby male students are perceived by some faculty as inherently more architect-like.

This lack of 'success' in school may represent as much a clash of expectations as a result of different treatment in classes or social interactions. Findings reveal with a great consistency that the extent to which many female and minority students feel their career goals may be mismatched with the profession as a result of experience within studio.

## HARASSMENT

Educational Research and theory indicate that male and female university students are treated differently in the classroom and that the nature of the curriculum as well as the teaching act itself often reflect and promote male centered actions ("Sex" 11). It is easy for female architecture students to feel trapped in studio. To make matters worse, many design instructors discourage students from working at home citing

of the traditions of the architecture education. Although sexual harassment occurs in all disciplines, it is believed that the culture of studio exacerbates these destructive patterns. The all-nighters--with no instructor present--simply makes it easier for sexual harassment to occur. Furthermore, female students are disinclined to label less offensive behavior from the peers as harassment. Victimized students may not report such incidents for fear of retaliation, or not being believed, and of being accused of provocation. Many students choose to discontinue contact with the harassing professor or classmate instead of reporting the harassment.

The harassment can be as subtle as silencing an individual voice in a text, display, or class discussion. Reported cases have been as extreme as one student raped by her studio classmates and required to continue working with him in the intimate studio environment. Some students as well as some administrators take the attitude that boys will be boys or advocate that women should give it right back ("Sex" 23). Some women actually take pride in the fact that they can handle the harassment. Students are not the only perpetrators

Image by Nathan Umstead





ality the fact that working in studio is one of the traditions of the architecture education. Although sexual harassment occurs in all disciplines, it is believed that the culture of studio exacerbates these destructive patterns. The all-nighters--with no instructor present--simply makes it easier for sexual harassment to occur. Furthermore, female students are disinclined to label less offensive behavior from the peers as harassment. Victimized students may not report such incidents for fear of retaliation, or not being believed, and of being accused of provocation. Many students choose to discontinue contact with the harassing professor or classmate instead of reporting the harassment.

as  
dio. The harassment can be as subtle as silencing an individual voice in a text, display, or class discussion. Reported cases have been as extreme



Image by Nathan Umstead

of harassment. "A certain young faculty member... was harassing me the way he critiqued my work... I found him constantly critiquing my attire in reference to my work, as

differently in the classroom the nature of the curriculum and the teaching act itself often and promote male centered ("Sex" 11). Masculine

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# ACTION / REACTION

## Affirmative Action and Modern Women

President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. It barred discrimination on race, color, religion, sex, national origin in hiring, firing, promotion, compensations, and other terms and privileges of employment. The American Institute of Architects responded by enacting Rule of Professional Conduct 1.401 of the AIA's Code of Ethics. It states, "Members shall not discriminate in their professional activities on the basis of race, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation," (Anthony 26). These provisions were made to protect those workers who had been discriminated against unfairly by the profession.

In order to ensure that firms and individuals were admitting minorities, Affirmative Action programs sprang up all over the nation. The greatest impact has been made in the educational arena, where legislation and programs have opened doors to colleges and universities that had previously excluded women and people of color, either explicitly or

implicitly from studying architecture.

But in the office, Affirmative Action was an unwelcome guest. Though equal opportunity laws prohibit workplace discrimination based on those items named in Title VII, Affirmative Action is specifically aimed at race and gender. Colleagues often resent having to hire so-called "affirmative action candidates," (Anthony 26). Even some beneficiaries of affirmative action programs find themselves viewed as tokens, pigeonholed into particular types of work to fit a diversity quota.

Backlash has already begun. Many states, including California have taken anti-affirmative action initiatives to the ballot. They claim that the true victims of AA are those who earned their opportunity without any aid, but these reports fail to acknowledge the privilege and lack of barriers placed before these individuals. White men are advantaged at entry level over all other groups and their advantage in attaining managerial positions grows throughout their careers. Even in jobs usually held by women, such

as nursing and elementary education men rise to supervisory positions more quickly (Klein 2). The U.S. Supreme Court upheld the right for the University of Michigan Ann Arbor to utilize Affirmative Action after in numerous lawsuits dating from 1977 claimed students felt slighted for being overlooked while equally qualified minority students were accepted. Reverse discrimination they shouted.

Until men and women, whites and blacks are given equal opportunity, Affirmative Action remains the best system for providing underprivileged with opportunities for success. Women still only make up 19% of registered architects, and even fewer are black or Latino. Due to the "old boys club" mentality that still exists, protection for these individuals rights to employment must be in place. It is hoped that once these individuals pave the way by breaking discrimination barriers and shattering glass ceilings that hiring disparities will be no more.

For resources see page 40.

# ACTION

## Modern Women

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## LIFE AFTER GR

### The Road Rules to

Internship is a critical period in the development of an architectural career. It is here after graduating from architectural school, young architects are first exposed to the professional work environment. The nature of this early experience can shape the future of their careers-- making or breaking the architect. According to a 1996 report, 4500 architecture graduates entered the workforce as interns every year (Anthony 118).

Young women architectural graduates are accustomed to a critical mass of females in their academic design studios. Once they enter the profession

example, can color their perception of the field and their future participation in it. Interviews, the Architectural Registration Examination (ARE) and the first job are critical moments

As one might expect, women are much more likely to agree that gender is a significant factor in interviewing for a job, even though striking is that 8 out of 10 agreed that physical appearance is a significant factor in the hiring process. Kathryn Anthony discussed the impact this had on her experience after graduation. "More often than not, alumni who are attracted

# THE LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE RECESSION



As a global economic recession struck in late 2008, shocking data revealed that the number of women laid off from the architecture profession was completely disproportionate to their representation. It led to many to question how much progress has been made to leave women so disposable during the lean times.

Reports from Great Britain released in the spring of 2009 showed that 25% of all architects claiming unemployment benefits are women. This may seem like a small amount until one notes that in Great Britain women make up only 14% of the licensed professionals (Bloomfield 1). This data is deeply disturbing.

Architects as a whole are claiming unemployment at a faster rate than any other-- 9 times the average rate in the past year. This same study found that as of April 2008, 150 architects were receiving aid, while in 2009, 1,490 were seeking the same help (Bloomfield 1). Some claim this inconsistency is due to the fact that many female architects

are younger and have yet to hold senior positions which would make them more valuable to the firm. An article in *Designer/Builder* confirms, "Women are often the last hired and the first fired." The article goes further to state that this issues is, "denying them the opportunity to build up a long enough tenure to actually move through the ranks," (Anthony 160).

Studies show that female architects were more likely than men to have been unemployed and for longer periods of time (Anthony 160). This has turned many women from the profession. Angela Brady of Brady Mallalieu said, "There is still sexism in architecture because there are not enough women. Any under-represented group will be overpowered... Too many employers fear that women are going to leave. It is a practical fear that they will end up having to pay a huge amount of maternity pay," (Bloomfield 2). This, however, just reminds us of the need for better family friendly practices in firms.

For more information see page 40.





photo by PA Archives

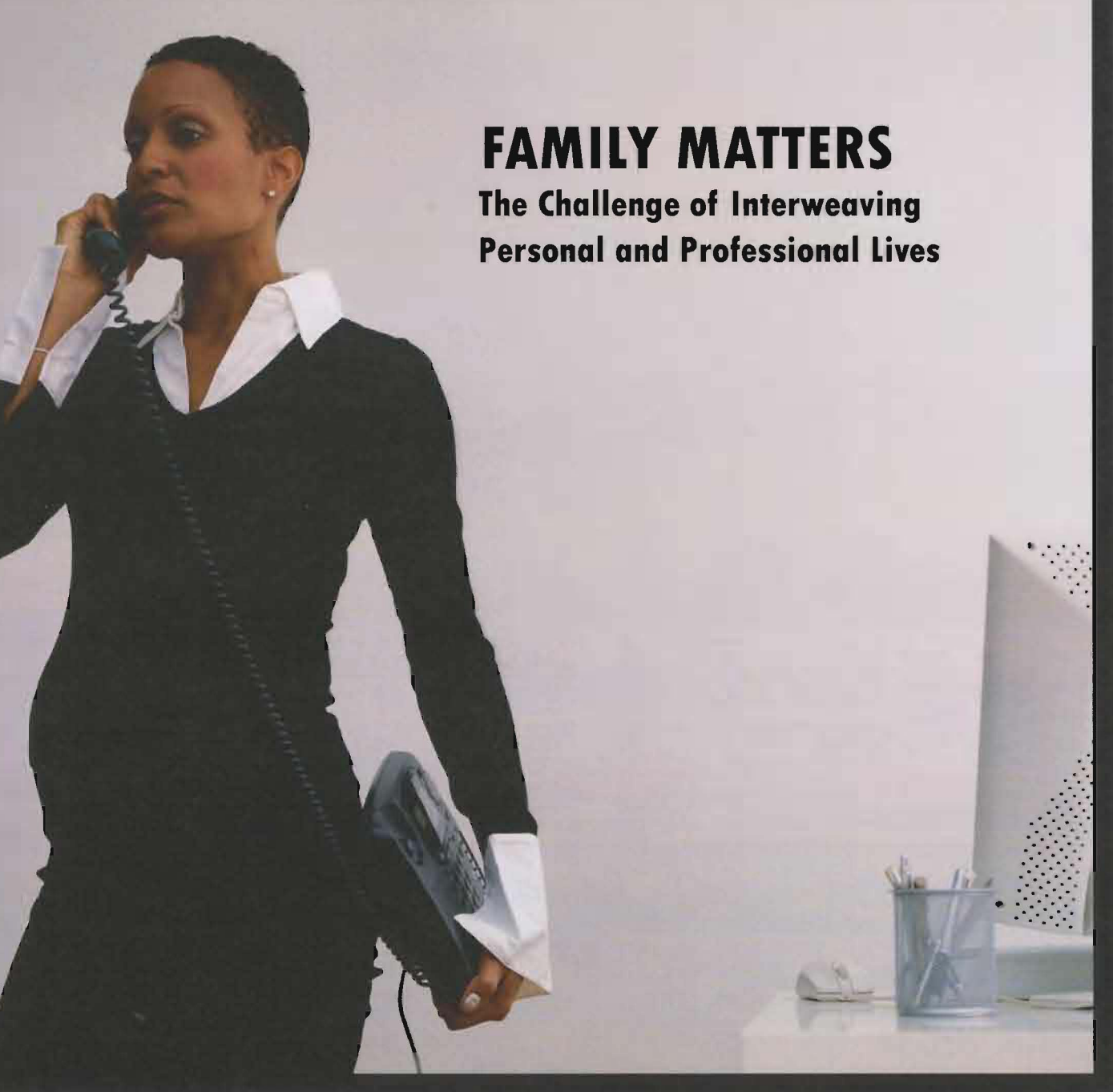
uck are younger and have yet to hold  
led senior positions which would make  
of them more valuable to the firm. An

## EQUAL PAY EQUAL DAY'S Wage Disparities in the Arch

Architects are paid a notoriously low salary, especially in light of the rigorous education and training required to become licensed and extremely long hours required in the office. One of the most overlooked complaints from the profession is the wage disparities that exist between white males and their female and colored counterpart with equal ex- was earning \$40,500 (54). Women continue to less at all levels of the w In 2005, women employed

Statistics Provided by Kathryn Anthony , D

Year	Men	Women
'95	\$38,532	\$34,812
'96	\$41,548	\$31,070
'97	\$46,384	\$26,602



# FAMILY MATTERS

## The Challenge of Interweaving Personal and Professional Lives

ing a career and family is a  
ge for all women. However,  
s as though the architecture  
on has limited the opportunities  
female employees to succeed  
workplace if they choose to  
children and raise a family.

the Pregnancy Discrimination  
tended existing short-term  
y or sick leave to pregnant  
and made it illegal to  
RYATID

discriminate on the basis of pregnancy. This would hopefully keep employers who feared time loss from employees who became mothers from preventing women from entering the workplace. Later, Bill Clinton signed in to law the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) in 1993 to protect the rights of men and women to take unpaid time off to take care of a new child, sick relative, or to recover from a serious illness. This seemed to be a welcome change that would protect workers

from the fear of losing their job when confronted with starting a family or dealing with serious issues at home or.

Unfortunately for architects, individuals can only receive the FMLA benefit if working for a firm of fifty or more workers. As of 1996, only 9% of firms employed twenty or more people and it can be assumed significantly fewer firms with fifty or more on payroll (Anthony 27). Even with so few firms providing the opportunity

## **MATTERS**

### **e of Interweaving Professional Lives**

for leave, there have been numerous reported cases of women architects returning to practice after maternity leave only to be laid off after a week. With such a rapidly evolving design profession, taking significant time off can result in loss of skill which employers can use to halt any further advancement or to justify termination.

Even with the benefits of the FMLA, being a parent presents greater challenges to professional careers.

The profession is notorious for overtime requirements, deadlines and meetings that consistently stretch the workday from its traditional eight-to-five schedule. Dealing with a sick child, negotiating school hours, and arrangements for summer vacation continue to plague parents. These issues

of experience. In turn, this slows careers and reduces their

Flex-time and part-time work may be the ideal solution to these social issues, but the profession is hostile to those unable to hold a full-time position. Many cited being side-lined to administrative work instead of working on design schemes. Rarely do part-timers advance to high positions, and only noted cases were in

***"If they [women architects] wish to combine their career with marriage and parenthood, they are liable to experience strain in the process. As an architect, mother and wife who has been present for architects who are also fathers...It is also more difficult to become a partner in a practice, especially if a new partner is in his or her thirtieth***





photo by amanda hoisington

er look at why scores of  
leave the profession at the  
crucial time of their careers

## DROP OUT

have finally succeeded in  
ing a substantial percentage  
men to the profession," writes  
Anthony, author of *Designing  
ersity*. "But we seem to be  
them just at the point in time  
their training makes them most  
e." Research proves Anthony  
ect. The number of women  
g architecture has risen from  
n 1990/91 to nearly forty  
in 2002/03. However,  
students qualify and enter  
actice, the picture changes  
omen constituting 13% of  
red Architects ("Equal" 1).

h has found that there is no  
ason why women architects  
he profession. Rather it is  
ed to a number of factors,  
g poor employment practices,  
family friendly working  
ements, few opportunities for  
and promotion, tokenism,  
alistic attitudes and difficulties  
taining skills and professional  
k during career breaks.

RYATID

Long hours, low pay, the inability  
of the profession to accommodate  
architects who are mothers, and a  
high degree of frustration are also  
attributed as reasons for women  
to abandon ship (Anthony 163).  
Several people believed that these  
women simply got tired of constantly  
having to prove themselves. These  
issues, including long hours and low  
wages, were also noted as causes  
for men to leave the profession,  
however at a much lower rate.

These factors contributed to gradual  
erosion of confidence and de-skilling,  
which led to poor job satisfaction. No  
links were made to lack of academic  
or practical ability or due to a poor  
career choice. Many of the drop  
outs were successful students that  
abandoned their career with regret.  
To this day the AIA has not investigated  
the high attrition rates of women,  
even though opportunities were made  
and funding requested. Any effort  
made to reduce the long hours culture  
of suffering that is instilled since  
education would make the profession  
more family friendly. Improving skill

support and welcoming members  
back after breaks will also encourage  
architects to return to the workforce.

Upon leaving the profession, women  
were undertaking a variety of  
occupations, including child-care,  
working in a shop, teaching English  
in a foreign language, journalism,  
project management, specialist  
building contractors, and estate  
agents. Research from Canada  
showed that many women choose to  
pursue careers that were contributing  
to the profession without the stigmas  
and demands of an architecture  
firm. They still considered themselves  
"architects" though they did not  
become licensed professionals.

Unregistered professionals are a  
very high proportion of all women  
architects. De-registered architects  
are also central to the profession,  
as they elaborate upon and extend  
the profession's core specialization  
(Adams 10). This may be one positive  
spin on the reasons why statistics show  
fewer registered architects for the  
number of graduating female students.

For more information on women's  
attrition rates in architecture,  
see the resources on page 40.

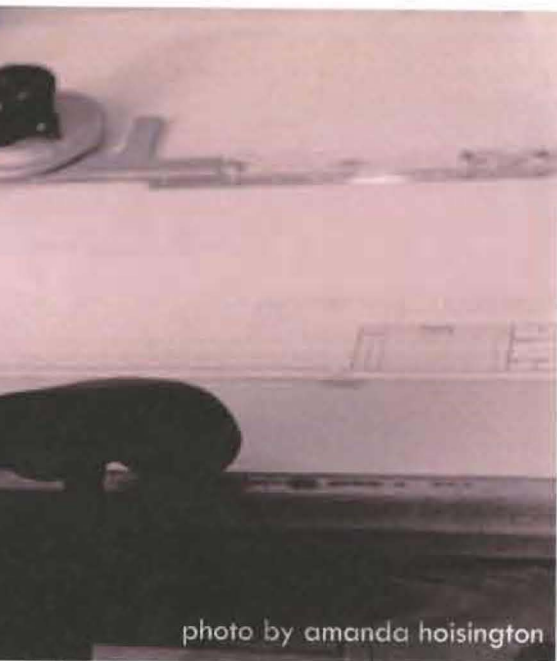


photo by amanda hoisington

support and welcoming members back after breaks will also encourage architects to return to the workforce.

Upon leaving the profession, women were undertaking a variety of occupations, including child-care.

## NOTABLE Pioneers in the



**Marion Mahony Griffin**

Marion was born February 14, 1871 in Chicago, Illinois. She is most famous for being the first employee of Frank Lloyd Wright and being the



**Beverly Willis**

Beverly was born in Tulsa, OK in 1928. Willis attended State University for two years, leaving as a result of the



tion for Women in  
cture- LOS ANGELOS  
Frampton Avenue  
e, California 90501-5034  
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cture- SEATTLE  
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Virginia Tech, P.O. Box 90001,  
Blacksburg, VA 24062-9001



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Berkeley, CA 94709  
W <http://owa-usa.org>



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ion  
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rk, NY 10023  
77.1200  
88.9009  
r.bwaf.org

Resources  
F O R  
W O M E N

The Woman's Bureau at the U.S.  
Department of Labor in Washington  
D. C. sponsors a toll-free telephone  
service offering advice and referrals  
for work and family issues; a  
pension-education campaign to help  
women plan for their retirments; and  
a for pay clearinghouse providing  
technical assistance to detect  
and remedy wage discrimination.  
Check out  
<http://www.dol.gov/wb/>  
for details.



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<http://www.cwarch.org/index.htm>  
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Architects  
c/o School of Architecture & Design  
College of Engineering, Architecture  
& Computer Sciences  
Howard University  
2366 6th Street, NW - Room 100  
Washington, DC 20059

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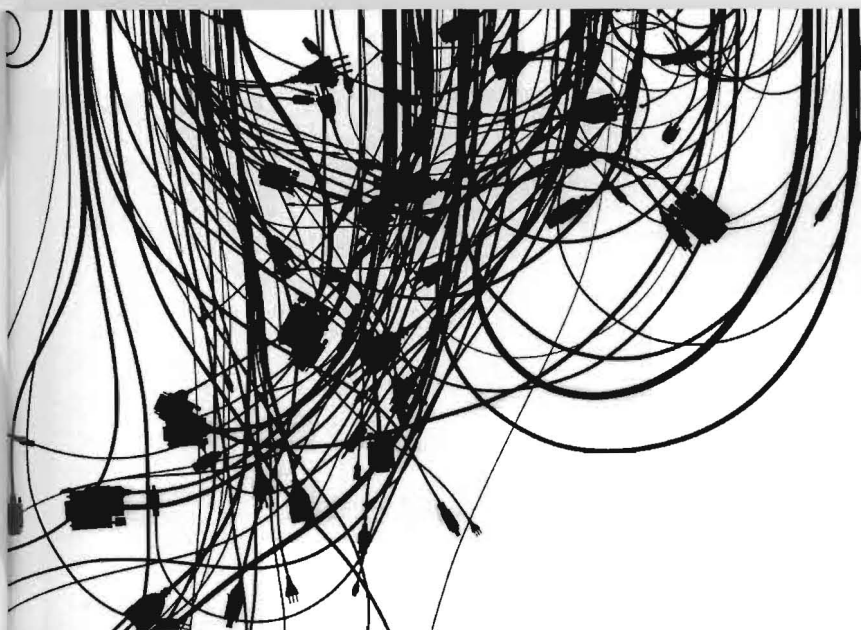
An interactive timeline provided  
by the Beverly Willis Architecture  
Foundation to expand historical  
knowledge and cultural recognition  
of women's contribution to American  
architecture of the 20th century.

W <http://www.bwaf.org/dna/>





Organization of Women Architects  
and Design Professionals  
PO Box 10078  
Berkeley, CA 94709  
W <http://owa-usa.org>



## The importance of Social N

One of the most vital resources to help women gain footing within the profession is social networking. Learning how others have survived and moved beyond their own struggles can

organizations lacked con to the needs of diverse a These underrepresented a faced with sexism, classicism, homophobia the ever present star

the **NATIONAL**  
**ORGANIZATION**  
of **MINORITY**



# NOT ONLY ZAHA

What is it like to be a female architect with a solely owned firm in the U.S. today?

By Suzanne Stephens

Originally Published in Architecture Record December 2006



Katherine McGraw Berry, AIA  
Photo © Albert Vecerka/Esto

**ou go by newspapers, monthly consumer magazines, you might think there is only one female architect designing significant buildings today—Zaha Hadid.**

To be sure, the London-Iraqi-born architect deserves a nod for her inventive assortment of structures completed in the last few years. But what about the rest? Aren't there other talented female architects out there, who, like Hadid, run their own design practices? Architecture Record has decided to take a closer look at women who run their own firms in the United States, to see how much gender affects getting a job. How far have women come since the feminist call-to-arms of the 1970s? In the landmark exhibition Women in American Architecture, an Historical and Contemporary Perspective opened at the Brooklyn Museum of Art in New York.

The show, organized by Susana Torre and sponsored by the Architectural League of New York, brought the contributions of scores of unheralded women architects, past and present, to the public's attention. What about today: Are women more prevalent in the profession than they were 30 years ago?

In order to reduce the number of variables in this not-very-scientific investigation, we talked to female architects who have practiced a number of years on their own, by themselves or with other women. We disallowed firms with male partners, unless the female principals had spent a length of time with their own firm before adding (or subtracting) male partners. The goal of this study is not to prove that women practicing alone are better or worse off than women with male partners: We just

wanted to find out what it's like. And what advice would the female architect give female architecture students and graduates who are thinking of starting their own firms?

While we have contacted women architects from various areas in the U.S., most come from New York City. The sample is skewed geographically probably because, with all the architecture schools in the city or nearby, and because of New York's attractiveness to young people looking for jobs, it tends to be a hot bed of female architects with their own firms. And in this highly competitive environment, with serious economic stakes, the women's stories bear scrutiny for others thinking of following the same path.

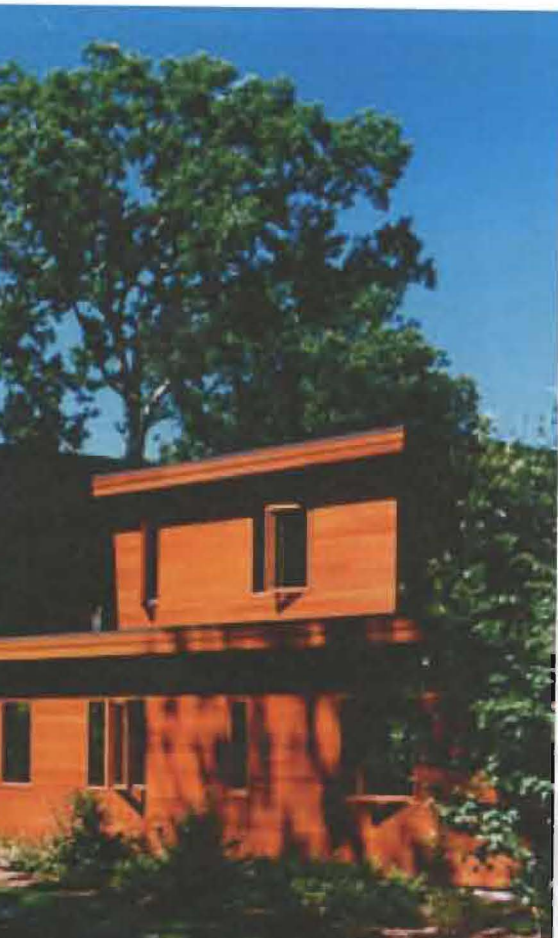
Today, women make up only 13.3 percent of the American Institute of Architects (AIA), whose members include 62,400 licensed architects. (Altogether,

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registered architects number 91,000 to 110,000, depending on the source.) The percentage of females may sound miny, but it indicates serious progress. In 1975, the AIA determined that women composed only 1.2 percent of all registered architects. By 1991, the AIA estimated that 9.59 percent of its members were women, with 4.3 percent owning their own firms. Fifteen years later, women form 13 percent of solely owned practices in the AIA. However, the number of female architecture students, according to the National Architectural Accrediting Board, averages 40 percent for B.Arch. and M.Arch. programs; apparently only a small portion enter the profession. Why do it?

Most women interviewed who decided to go it alone wanted a practice where they made the design decisions, period. Suman Sorg, FAIA, who has

their own offices by taking on sometimes when moonlight employed by large offices. raising children argue that their own firms has given them flexibility with their time, since hard to stay competitive in large while tending to a family (and helpful husbands).

Katherine McGraw Berry, started her own one-person in New York in 1985 when twin boys, came from Kohn Fox. But she found the fle







Luce et Studio Architects  
Photo provided Luce et Studio

architect Richard Gluckman,

clients

the-worn method of depending on referrals operates for women, many of whom met clients while working in their offices. Some took a more aggressive tack. Wendy Evans Joseph, who started up her six-person office in 1987 when she designed a pedestrian bridge at Rockefeller University in New York City. One night at a dinner party, the president of the research university described the economic problem of building the bridge to her. Joseph, who had worked on large commissions, such as the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., while she was at Pei Cobb Freed, submitted an unsolicited proposal, using engineering consultants and Columbia students working on her dining room table. She got the job.

Leers, FAIA, and Jane  
RYATID

Weinzapfel, FAIA, who opened their Boston-based, 22-person practice in 1982, specialized in infrastructural and technical work, such as the Operations Control Center for the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, from the start—and still do. “We have had a slow, steady growth with low budget, low visibility projects, which insulated us from economic boom-and-bust cycles,” said Leers. It also has meant that the gender question has been less of an issue, since public-sector programs encourage minority involvement. Karen Bausman AIA, notes that New York City is trying to include women-only architecture firms in its commissions. Both she and Beyhan Karahan, AIA, each with 11-person and 15-person firms, respectively, in the city, are on the list of architects for New York’s design excellence program in its Department of Design and Construction.

One major change that female architects have noticed over the past 20 to 30 years is the increase in women as clients,

public-sector work. Leers has noticed, that “being women means we appeal to clients who are risk takers.” But Gisue Hariri notes about selection committees, “If no women are among the listmakers, then no women get on the list.” For her part, Diane Lewis, AIA, who maintains a New York City firm that ranges from one to 11 architects, says, “I attract a special client—one with a particularly intellectual and artistic bent.” Her projects include art galleries, and currently a charter school, and a loft for Mark Wigley, dean of Columbia’s Graduate School of Planning and Preservation and his wife, Beatriz Colomina, Princeton architectural historian and theorist. Developers are often another story. As a rule, jobs with big-time developers remain elusive to most of the female architects interviewed. Deborah Berke, AIA, who has a New York office with 25 architects and designers, observes that the old-fashioned developer can still be dismissive, but then she doesn’t run into that sort too often. “The ones who call women are already open; they are a preselected group,” she notes. Julie Snow, FAIA, whose Minneapolis practice varies between 10 and 15 people, comments that some clients aren’t going to feel comfortable with a female. “On the other hand, we’ve gotten jobs because male clients want a female perspective—and not only about the design of the kitchen,” she says. Audrey Matlock, AIA, who has a 12-person office, AM Arch, in Manhattan, notes that if you don’t get a job, you are never quite sure whether gender was behind it. Right now she is designing a sports center and a large (30,000-square-foot) house in Kazakhstan—which she got through a referral from Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM), a former employer.

Ronnette Riley, FAIA, whose New York office opened in 1987 and numbers 14 architects and designers, has found working with developers difficult because they are “conservative and risk-averse. They

especially in cultural, institutional, and public-sector work. Leers has noticed, that "being women means we appeal to clients who are risk takers." But Gisue Hariri notes about selection committees, "If no women are among the listmakers, then no women get on the list." For her part, Diane Lewis, AIA, who maintains a New York City firm that ranges from one to 11 architects, says, "I attract a special client—one with a particularly intellectual and artistic bent." Her projects include art galleries, and currently a charter school, and a loft for Mark Wigley, dean of Columbia's Graduate School of Planning and Preservation and his wife, Beatriz Colomina, Princeton architectural historian and theorist. Developers are often another story. As a rule, jobs with big-time developers remain elusive to most of the female architects interviewed. Deborah Berke, AIA, who has a New York office with 25 architects and designers, observes that the old-fashioned developer can still be dismissive, but then she doesn't

want to work with people who look like them." Yet Riley adds she met one developer who became a client because of a car she bought—a BMW 645 Ci. "He stopped me and asked me about how the car ran," says Riley, who, as a native Californian, could talk the guy talk. (She also met another client, a writer, over a similar chat about the car.) Alison Spear, AIA, who has a six-person office in Miami, Florida, loves working with developers—the more intense the better. She just finished her first 12-story condominium building, The Spear, for the developer of Aqua, Craig Robins. Spear, who provides interior design services as well as architectural ones, and used to be based in New York, says many clients like the one-stop-shopping approach.

The press

Luce, AIA, of San Diego, who has a strong interest in landscape and urban design, as well as architecture. Riley explains that not only her firm, but the fact that her firm, Riley Studio, is 75 percent female, attracts people to assume the firm does interiors. Having just won a 2006 *Week/Architectural Record* award for 2006 for her Nissan America building outside Jolla, California [record, November 2006, page 90], she should dispel this notion, but she works hard, because I want to do every detail of the job."

New York-based Annabelle Seligson, AIA, seems to find little time for getting press, much of it stemming from her art-world clients, including commissioned galleries and lofts, plus the Neue Galerie





Wendy Evans Joseph Architecture  
Photo By Wyatt Gallery

and led her to decide to open an office, Archi-tectonics, in New York. Now her firm has 15 architects and designers. "I had no press until the late 1990s," she notes, adding, "I'm kind of a slow learner." Dubbeldam explains she left her previous firm, and my theory that you work slowly, teach, research, and be on jobs you believe in—the slow pace." Having a project in New York, included in the 1999 Museum of Modern Art exhibition *The Un-Private House*, didn't hurt.

Surprisingly, a number of women architects remark that Zaha Hadid drew the attention from the press, while they avow, "More power to her." Of course the scale and inventiveness of Hadid's built work—from museums to mobile plants—has helped, along with her larger-than-life personality. As Toshiko Mori, FAIA, who runs the New York office of a dozen architects while occupying the chair of architecture at Harvard's Graduate School of Design, notes, "The press impact—people who produce an interesting narrative." Mori points out, however, that Kazuyo Sejima (of

getting attention from the press, and "she's the opposite of Zaha—very self-effacing and not gregarious." Still, she notes, the media go for the exotic and the extreme in architectural design: "Some of us deal with ordinary, not glamorous issues."

Getting publicity is important, but some women, such as Berke, contend that "good press does not specifically lead to new work—and this is not a gender issue. The press attention usually validates your work for your existing clients." Nevertheless, Berke says that people tend to keep clips on an architect—for years. When Jerry Adler, was writing *High Rise: How 1,000 Men and Women Worked Round the Clock for Five Years and Lost \$200 Million Building a Skyscraper*, published in 1993, he focused attention on Matlock, then a senior designer at SOM. She easily came across as one of *High Rise's* liveliest characters: New York magazine even prominently displayed a photo of the blond-haired Matlock in a black leather jacket on a red Ducati motorcycle in its May 3, 1993, coverage of the book. By then, Matlock had opened her own storefront office in New York City's Tribeca—where she and her team of 12 visibly demonstrate to passersby what an architect does.

Related to press coverage is the question of marketing—that is, going after work in a systematic

interviewed take a wait-for-the-phone-to-ring approach. Fougerson admits that she "tries to meet new people and have my clients introduce me to other clients." She also argues that "women architects have to work twice as hard as men to get attention and prove themselves." Margaret Helfand, FAIA, whose New York office, Helfand Architecture, numbers 10 architects and designers, maintains that marketing is "the most critical piece of daily experience, yet the toughest nut to crack for any architect." Academic experts concur: Katherine Anthony, professor of architecture at the University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign and author of *Designing for Diversity* (2001), argues that "networking is all the more crucial to women who run their own architectural practice." How the network works

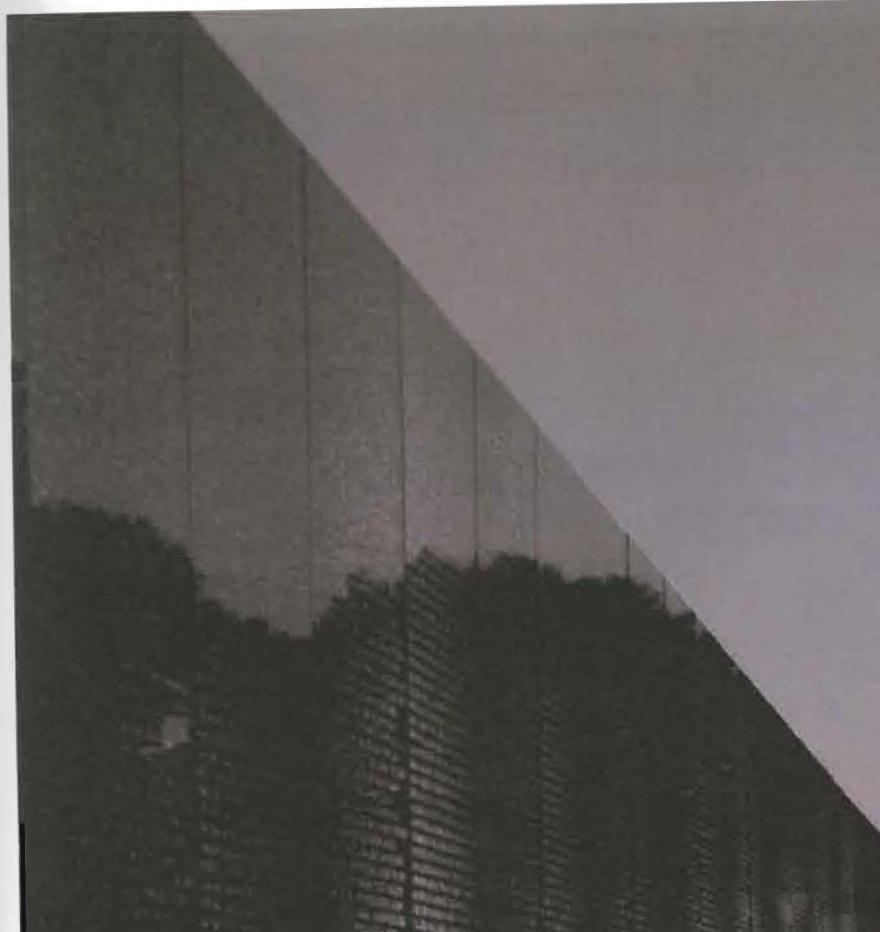
Networking, of course, helps if you practice architecture near your alma mater, and can make use of all those former colleagues who later turn into potential clients. Some women don't do this. Helfand grew up in California, went east to Swarthmore College, in Pennsylvania, but then headed back west to study architecture at the University of California, Berkeley, before settling in New York, where she started her own office 25 years ago. Jennifer Luce grew up in Canada, and then worked in Virginia before moving to San Diego in 1987, where she could not rely on academic or professional contacts. "It took a long time," she says.

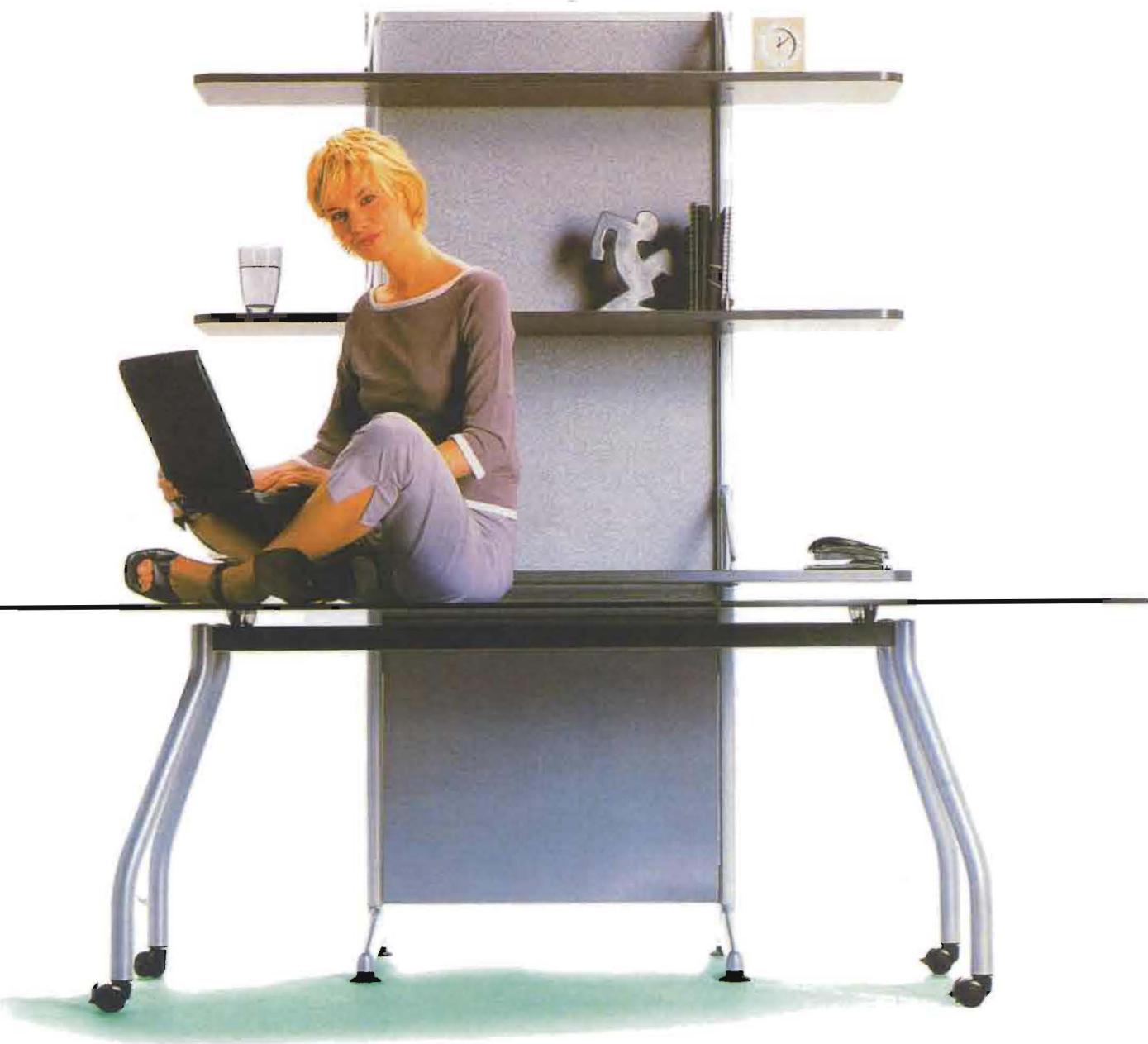
Similarly, McKinney studied architecture at the University of Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia, and then worked in Boston before heading for Austin in 1984, where

*continued on page 41*



Also way. Many of the women architects interviewed take a wait-for-the-phone-to-ring approach. Fougeron admits that she "tries to meet new people and have my clients introduce me to other clients." She also argues that "women architects have to work twice as hard as men to get attention and prove themselves." Margaret Helfand, FAIA, whose New York office, Helfand Architecture, numbers 10 architects and designers, maintains that marketing is "the most critical piece of daily experience, yet the toughest nut to crack for any architect." Academic experts concur: Katherine Anthony, professor of architecture at the University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign and author of *Designing for Diversity* (2001), argues that "networking is all the more crucial to women who run their own architectural practice." How the network works





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"Equal Opportunity is Everyone's Business." *Why do women lead*



that the

I sponsor would, like the kingmaker-  
x foolish if he sponsored a female  
any case, his wife would object.

and think that the last element of  
s's definition of a star, "sexual  
would have nothing to do with  
re. But I wondered why there  
amiliar ring to the tone-- hostile,  
sly self-righteous, yet somehow  
of letters to the editor that follow  
out firm publishes, until I recognized  
tone middle America employs in  
the editors that follow pornography.

who write angry letters about our  
parently feel we are architectural  
s, or at least we permit ourselves  
they would not take, but possibly  
re is one, by an English architecture

"Venturi has a niche, all right,  
down there with the flagellant,  
er-fetish and the Blagdon Nude  
Rapist." These are written by men,  
are written to or of Bob alone.

ggested that the star system, which  
to many architects, is doubly hard  
n in a sexist environment, and that,  
pper levels of the profession, the  
rchitect who work with her husband  
ubmerged in his reputation. My  
ations are speculative. We have  
ogy of architecture. Architects are  
med to social analysis and mistrust  
ogist have fatter fish to fry. But  
support for my thesis from some  
entists, from ironists in architecture,  
ny women architects, from some  
of my firm, and from my husband.

here be a star system? It is  
ble. I think, owing to the prestige  
esign in architecture. But the schools  
should reduce the importance for  
system by broadening the student's  
he profession to show value in its  
pects. Heaven knows, skills other  
gn are important to the survival of  
ure firms. The schools should also  
he student's sense of inadequacy  
design, rather than, as now,  
ng it though wrongly authoritarian  
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l for gurus, and those they would  
uld be different--more responsible  
an than gurus are asked to be today.

ent that gurus are unavoidable and  
ampant in the architecture profession,  
nal problem of submersion through  
ystem in insoluble. I could improve  
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ned to teaching or if I abandoned  
tion with my husband. The later  
ened to some extent as our office  
n and our individual responsibilities  
ake more of our time. We certainly  
s time at the drawing board together

RYATID

On the larger scene, all is not lost. Not all  
architects belong to the men's club; more  
architects than before are women; some  
critics are learning; the AIA actively wants  
to help; and most architects, in theory at  
least, would rather not practice discrimination  
if someone will prove to them that they  
have been and will show them how to stop.

The foregoing is an abridgment of an article  
I wrote in 1975. I decided not to publish it  
at the time, because I judged that strong  
sentiments on feminism in the world of  
architecture would ensure my ideas a hostile  
reception, which could hurt my career and the  
prospects of my firm. However, I did share  
the manuscript with friends and, in samizdat,  
it achieved a following of sorts. Over the  
years I have received letters asking for copies.

In 1975, I recounted my first experience  
of the new surge of women in architecture.  
The ratio of men to women is now 1:1 in  
many schools. The talent and enthusiasm  
of these young women has burst creatively  
into the profession. At conferences today  
I find many women participants; some  
have ten years or more in the field.

Architecture, too, has changed since I wrote. My  
hope that architecture would heed the social  
planner's dicta did not pan out, and women  
did not ride in on that trend. Postmodernism  
did change the views of architect but not in  
the way I had hoped. Architects lost their  
social concerns; the architect as macho  
revolutionary was succeeded by the architect  
as *dernier cri* of the art world; the cult of  
personalities increased. This made things  
worse for women because, in architecture,  
the *dernier cri* is as male as the prima donna.

This rise in female admissions and the move  
to the right in architecture appear to be  
trends in opposite directions, but they are, in  
fact, unrelated because they occur at either  
end of the seniority spectrum. The women  
entrants are young; the cult of personality  
occurs at the top. The two trends have  
yet to meet. When they do, it will be  
fascinating to see what happens. Meanwhile,  
affirmative action programs have helped  
many female-owned firms get started  
but may have hindered the absorption of  
women into the mainstream of the profession,  
because women who integrate large existing  
practices gain no affirmative action standing  
unless they own 51 percent of the firm.

During the eighties there has been a  
gradual increase of women architects in  
academe. (I suspect that the growth has  
been slower than in other professions.)

I now receive fewer offers for deanships,  
probably because there are more female  
candidates than before and because word  
is out that I am too busy to accept. I have  
little time to lecture. As our office has grown,  
Bob and I have found more, rather than less,  
opportunities to work together, since some

directors who form the core of our firm.

During this period, we have ceased to be  
regarded as young turks and have seen a  
greater acceptance of our ideas than we  
would have dreamed possible. Ironically,  
a citation honoring Bob for his "discovery  
of the everyday American environment"  
was written in 1979 by the same critic  
who in 1971, judged Bob lacking for  
sharing my interest in everyday landscape.

For me, things are much the same at the top  
as they were. The discrimination continues  
at the rate of about one incident a day.  
Journalist who approach our firm seem to  
feel that they will not be worth their salt if  
they do not "deliver Venturi." The battle for  
turf and the race for status among critics  
still require the beating-off of women. In  
the last twenty years, I cannot recall one  
major article by a high-priests critic about  
a women architect. Young women critics,  
as they enter the fray, become as macho as  
the men and for the same reason--to survive  
and win in the competitive world of critics.

For a few years, writers on architecture  
were interested in sexism and they feminist  
movement and wanted to discuss them with  
me. In a joint interview, they would ask  
Bob about work and question me about  
my "woman's problem." "Write about my  
work!" I would plead, but they seldom did.

Some young women in architecture question  
the need for the feminist movement, claiming  
to have experienced no discrimination.  
My concern is that, although school is  
not a nondiscriminatory environment, it is  
probably the least discriminatory on they  
will encounter in their careers. By the same  
token, the early years in practice bring little  
differentiation between men and women.  
It is as they advance that difficulties arise,  
when firms and clients shy away from  
entrusting high-level responsibilities to  
women. One seeing their male colleagues  
draw out in front of them, women who lack  
a feminist awareness are likely to feel that  
their failure to achieve is their own fault.

Over the years, it has slowly dawned on me that  
the people who cause my painful experiences  
are ignorant and crude. They are the critics  
who have not read enough and the clients  
who do not know why they have come to us.  
I have been helped to realize this by noticing  
that the scholars whose work we most respect,  
the clients who projects intrigue us, and the  
patrons whose friendships inspire us, have no  
problem understanding my role. They are the  
sophisticates. Partly through them I gain heart  
and realize that, over the last twenty years,  
I have managed to do my work and, despite  
some sliding, to achieve my own self respect.

**Not Only Zaha, continued from**

**page 37**

most of the architects went to the University  
of Texas. She too had to build up contacts  
over the years, but cites her involvement  
with the organization Austin Women

of our responsibilities have been delegated to the senior associates and project directors who form the core of our firm.

During this period, we have ceased to be regarded as young turks and have seen a greater acceptance of our ideas than we would have dreamed possible. Ironically, a citation honoring Bob for his "discovery of the everyday American environment" was written in 1979 by the same critic who in 1971, judged Bob lacking for sharing my interest in everyday landscape.

For me, things are much the same at the top as they were. The discrimination continues at the rate of about one incident a day. Journalist who approach our firm seem to feel that they will not be worth their salt if they do not "deliver Venturi." The battle for turf and the race for status among critics still require the beating-off of women. In the last twenty years, I cannot recall one major article by a high-priests critic about a women architect. Young women critics, as they enter the fray, become as macho as the men and for the same reason--to survive and win in the competitive world of critics.

For a few years, writers on architecture were interested in sexism and they feminist movement and wanted to discuss them with me. In a joint interview, they would ask Bob about work and question me about my "woman's problem." "Write about my

in Architecture as crucial in fostering communication among colleagues.

A number of women find meeting architects through architectural organizations leads to jobs. Wendy Evans Joseph, who has served as president of the New York Architectural League, and, like Helfand, was a president of the New York chapter of the AIA, reports that the commission to design The Inn at Price Tower in Frank Lloyd Wright's landmark structure in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, came through architects in Tulsa whom she met on an AIA committee. "It was too small a job for them and required a fair amount of interior design," she says. Leers notes that teaching, besides providing a way of exploring ideas, turns out to be good for networking. "Male teaching colleagues have turned out to be advocates and sponsors of our firm, particularly in situations where they are advising clients, boards of directors, and deans of schools on upcoming buildings," she says.

#### Marked women

In terms of marketing and getting the job, the women are quite aware they are still unusual. Leers accepts that "women are marked," and need to be conscious of that while walking into an interview: "Jane and I see a design challenge; the client sees two women." In going into the client meeting, many women note that the presentation style, including the dress, sends important subliminal signals. Helfand decided early

into three groups: "One third of them want to be told what to do; one third want to be told, but constantly have to know they know what they're doing; one third, no matter what, want to have a fight." Nevertheless, a number of women say that after they show what they are talking about, they win smoothly. Yet Karahan remarks that when she visits a site for publicly sponsored projects, the contractor's questions are rare to her--always to the project manager, often a man. (Karahana, who teaches at the New York Institute of Technology, obviously knows the answers.) Diller comments that she usually does not have this problem--"but it helps that I'm 6-foot-tall," she says, half-jokingly. Leers comments that her 6-foot-tall height catches the men on the construction site off guard. One medium-height woman quipped that at least they can't see her high-heeled boots if they need to see "stature." Most female architects feel that as they get older, the gender problem disappears, although Berry thinks that her way more often with contractors was when she was first starting out in her career. "They treat you differently when you're young. You can play with them. You can be tremendously persuasive," she conjectures contractors trust women more than men, noting, "They know you're going to be straight as an arrow and you won't be on a payment schedule."



# WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE

ecture in the United States  
erging from a decade of  
ection during which the social  
ous and humanist attitudes of  
te sixties and early seventies  
essentially abandoned in favor  
search for the ultimate pastiche  
onstructions isolated from the  
e who use them" writes Kathryn  
ny in *Designing for Diversity*.

mbination of both the diminished  
for traditional architectural  
ce and the decline in enrollment  
e architecture schools suggests  
architecture is in need of a new  
ach. Many say the profession  
change until the educational  
n changes, while others ask us  
t for the "good ol' boys" to die  
et, as in other male-dominated  
like science and engineering,  
argument can be made that  
reative advance of the field  
depend substantially on the  
utions of underrepresented  
sionals. These individuals are  
likely to challenge the status quo  
xplore the boundaries of their  
ons. So how do women succeed?

architects triumph in the  
sion either through the fortune  
anding a supportive work  
nment early in their careers, or  
ntelligence of knowing when to

leave a dead end job. Mentorship  
also plays a key role in success.  
Mentors make the journey easier by  
providing opportunities to develop  
professionally while recognizing and  
validating their work. Others argue  
to develop an indispensable area  
of expertise. Many women choose  
to supplement their architecture  
education for this very reason.

*When Ginger Rogers danced across the movie screens with her partner Fred Astaire, it was he who most often received credit for being the century's most talented dancer. Yet the fact remains that she did everything that he did, only backwards and in heels.*

Finding environments receptive to  
minorities is key. The most successful  
female architects were able to move  
to design climates that were new and  
uninhibited. Women in California  
during a period of rapid growth at  
the turn of the century were readily  
accepted in a variety of fields. It is  
this frontier mentality that provides  
freedom from confining stereotypes.

The current lack of feminist  
consciousness according to Sherry

Ahrentzen is due in part to the small  
number of women in the field, their  
academic training, their relative  
lack of power in decision making  
capacities and most importantly to  
the tension between the practice  
of architecture within a capitalistic  
patriarchal economy and the discipline  
of architecture, which is to embrace  
knowledge and criticism of the social  
production of the built environment.  
By increasing the number of women  
in the profession, gender will become  
a negligent issues in comparison  
to the contributions that are made.

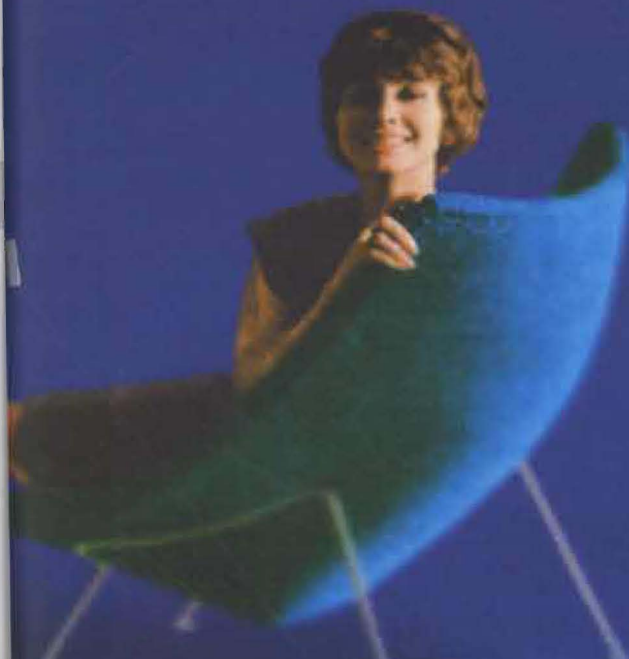
At the moment we are facing an  
uphill battle, but it will not always  
be this way. The contributions  
women make to architecture can  
and will have an impact of the  
modern environment and its users.

Women architects, as the future of  
the profession, your triumphs and  
struggles will help the profession  
reach new echelons and discover new  
territories unimagined. The challenges  
are great, but not insurmountable.  
This publication was designed as  
a resource to bring awareness to  
the barriers and provide a road  
map for the challenges that one will  
face. With better preparedness, it  
is possible to navigate these issues  
with confidence and certainty. It may  
not be easy, but it will be worth it.



# FROM HERE

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on.  
Ahrentzen is due in part to the small number of women in the field, their academic training, their relative lack of power in decision making capacities and most importantly to the tension between the practice of architecture within a capitalistic patriarchal economy and the discipline of architecture, which is to embrace knowledge and criticism of the social production of the built environment.





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